

## Pressure Washing of Buildings, Rooftops, and Other Large Objects

---

This activity applies to you if you are engaged in pressure washing of large, immobile objects such as building facades and rooftops on a site-to-site basis. Pressure washing can readily degrade water quality as the runoff and loosened solids typically travel directly into the storm drainage system. Wash water from pressure washing operations can be contaminated with suspended solids, heavy metals, and possibly other pollutants present on the objects being washed. Pressure washing of boats in boat yards, marinas, and dry dock areas is covered by a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, administered by the Washington State Department of Ecology, so the BMPs listed below may not apply to pressure washing in these locations.

### **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

**The following BMPs, or equivalent measures, methods, or practices are required if you are engaged in pressure washing of large objects:**

**1**

In situations where soaps or detergents are used and the surrounding area is paved, pressure washers must use a water collection device that enables collection of wash water and associated solids. A sump pump, wet vacuum or similarly effective device must be used to collect the runoff and loose materials. The collected runoff and solids must be disposed of properly.



See BMP Info Sheet 2 in Chapter 4 for information on disposal options.

**2**

If soaps or detergents are not used, and the surrounding area is paved, wash runoff does not have to be collected but must be screened. Pressure washers must use filter fabric or some other type of screen on the ground and/or in the catch basin to trap the particles in wash water runoff.



If you are pressure washing on a grassed area (with or without soap), runoff must be dispersed as sheet flow as much as possible, rather than as a concentrated stream. The wash runoff must remain on the grass and not drain to pavement.



Another option is to hire a mobile washer who collects and recycles water or complies with the above.

If the painted surface being pressure washed is painted with lead or other heavy metal-bearing paint (such as chromium or cadmium), consider using a commercial pressure washing service that can collect, test, and properly dispose of the wastewater.

### ***Additional BMPs***

**The following BMPs are not required, but they can provide improved pollution control:**

A catch basin insert, configured for debris removal, may remove some of the pollutants in runoff from this activity. Catch basin inserts require frequent maintenance to be effective, so you should consider this when evaluating your options.



See BMP Info Sheet 9 in Chapter 4 for more information.

---

For more information or assistance in implementing these best management practices, contact the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks Stormwater Services Section at 206-296-1900.

Reader Note: The above requirements are the minimum required BMPs. If these BMPs fail to prevent discharges to the storm drainage system you will be asked to take additional measures to correct the continued pollution discharges.